

REMARKS

This Supplemental Preliminary Amendment is hereby filed further to the Request for Continued Examination ("RCE") Transmittal previously filed on November 23, 2005 in this application (which requested the entry of the Amendment and Exhibits A-C as previously filed on September 23, 2005 in this application).

Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing Supplemental Preliminary Amendment before issuance of the first Office Action after the filing of the above-discussed RCE in this application. In this Supplemental Preliminary Amendment, Applicants amend independent claim 1 to differently describe an embodiment of the disclosure of the instant application. In particular, Applicants' undersigned representative held a brief telephone discussion with Examiner Gautam Patel on November 17, 2005 to request clarification of the Advisory Action that was mailed on October 28, 2005 in this application.

The Examiner explained to Applicants' undersigned representative in that telephone discussion that the Exhibits A-C, as previously filed in this application with the after-final response on September 23, 2005, had not yet been entered. He indicated that a Request for Continued Examination ("RCE") would need to be filed in order to have these materials, as well as the Amendment also filed on that date, properly entered into this application. The associated arguments filed on September 23, 2005 could then be fully considered. Accordingly, the above-discussed RCE was filed on November 23, 2005 in order to accomplish these tasks by requesting that the Amendment and associated Exhibits previously filed on September 23, 2005 be entered and fully considered.

Examiner Patel recommended in the November 17, 2005 discussion that subject matter disclosed in connection with Fig. 5 of this application be added to independent claim 1. He indicated that this would advance the prosecution of this application. Accordingly, in accordance with the Examiner's helpful suggestion, Applicants have opted to additionally proceed with amending claim 1 in the instant Supplemental Preliminary Amendment. These changes to independent claim 1 even further distinguish the claims of this application from the currently applied U.S. Patent No. 5,822,346 to Arai.

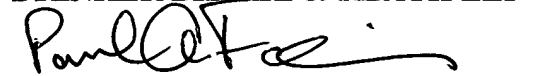
It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added to this application by these changes. Examination of this application with these new amendments to independent claim 1 is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at 202-842-8812 if any further discussion is deemed warranted at this time.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this Supplemental Preliminary Amendment, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0573. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

DRINKER BIDDLE & REATH LLP

By:



Paul A. Fournier

Reg. No. 41,023

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Customer No. 055694

DRINKER BIDDLE & REATH LLP

1500 K Street, N.W., Suite 1100

Washington, DC 20005-1209

Tel.: (202) 842-8800

Fax: (202) 842-8465